



**City of Marlborough**  
**FIRE DEPARTMENT**  
**215 MAPLE STREET**  
**MARLBOROUGH MASSACHUSETTS**  
**01752**

**Marlborough Fire Department Bi Directional/Unidirectional Antenna Specifications**  
**For In Building Fire Department Radio Coverage in Buildings or Structures.**  
**\*updated 10/07/2013**

Emergency communications have been proven to be the lifeline for firefighters, police officers and EMS personnel inside of large structures. Research and investigations into Line of Duty Deaths (LODDs) and injuries to Fire, Police and EMS personnel show that the loss of reliable communications inside of such buildings is a contributing factor in death and injuries to emergency personnel.

Reliable in-building communications is a paramount requirement for the safety of emergency personnel as well as that of the public and is major factor in the successful outcome of emergency operations inside of large buildings.

This policy is to enhance the City of Marlborough's emergency communications in buildings that could be subject to communications breakdown due to size, building materials, design, geography and other impediments to radio communications.

The Marlborough Fire Department has developed these specifications in conjunction with the requirements of the International Building Code (IBC 2009) and the Massachusetts Building Code, 8<sup>th</sup> edition (effective 01/07/2011).

New buildings or structures or portions of existing buildings or structures undergoing renovations or rehabilitation (25% or more) that constitutes new construction shall be equipped with in building radio systems as an integral component of the life safety equipment of the building or structure. Any building built in phases must have the in building system installed as if the construction were 100 % complete.

The system installed must comply with all applicable sections of FCC rules (Parts 22.90 and 101).

**Exceptions:**

Buildings that have sufficient levels of radio coverage to satisfy the requirements of this specification may **request a waiver with the following constraints:**

- a.** A radio survey as described in this specification must be submitted and signed by a qualified radio technician. *(All interior partitions must be completed prior to the survey)*

- b. A permit must be submitted with proper signatures
  - c. If approved, the waiver will only be valid for a 5 year period at which time a new radio survey must be submitted.
  - d. At any time it is determined that radio coverage does not meet this specification, the waiver will be withdrawn and the property owner is then required to provide radio coverage as required by this specification.
  - e. The building owner is responsible for the costs of the radio coverage survey.
- One and Two Family dwellings as defined in the Massachusetts State Building Code, 780 CMR;
  - Buildings or structures or portions of buildings or structures where the fire department has performed radio tests for signal reception and determined radio coverage is adequate.

Adequate radio coverage shall include a minimum signal level of DAQ 4 (Delivered Audio Quality 4 [speech easily understood; occasional noise/distortion]). This standard shall be assessed utilizing hand held radio units used by the Marlborough Fire Department.

The in-building radio system shall provide signal strength as follows:

- A minimum of  $-95$  dBm available in 95% of the floor area of each floor of the building and 100% communications in any stairwells and at fire alarm control panels when transmitted from the Fire Department dispatch center.
- A minimum of  $-95$  dBm received at the Fire Department dispatch center from 95% of the area of each floor of the building and 99% communications from the following critical areas:
  - stairwells
  - emergency command centers
  - fire alarm control rooms
  - sprinkler rooms/fire pump rooms
  - elevator lobbies/control rooms
  - any other areas deemed critical by the Marlborough Fire Department.
- Required in-building radio systems shall be FCC certified Bi-Directional UHF Amplifier(s) as needed. This amplifier shall contain a 10 Mg window/filter to assure only MFD and MPD frequencies pass through the amplifier.

- Assembly and installation of the Bi-Directional Amplification System shall be in accordance with the Massachusetts Electrical Code as applicable.
- The radio system may utilize a radiating cable system or an internal multiple antenna system.
- Transmission lines used in this system shall be type CATVR for all applications except for those run in ducts, plenums or environmental air spaces, they shall be CATVP. Equivalents are allowed as in article 820 of the National Electrical Code (NFPA 70) is acceptable.
- Cables other than radiating coaxial cables shall be run in Electrical Metallic Tubing (EMT) or as otherwise approved by the fire chief or his designee.

### **Public Safety Frequencies**

#### **The Marlborough Fire Department transmits and receives on the following frequencies:**

- Channel 1 (operations and dispatch)
  - Transmit: 858.4625 MHz
  - Receive: 813.4625 MHz
  - PL23
- Channel 16 (fireground frequency)
  - Transmit: 854.3875 MHz
  - Receive: 809.3875 MHz
  - PL174

#### **The Marlborough Police Department transmits and receives on the following frequencies:**

- Police Channel 1
  - Transmit: 856.4625
  - Receive: 811.4625
  - PL: 23
- Police Channel 2
  - Transmit: 857.4625
  - Receive: 812.4625
  - PL: 23

### **Power Supplies**

- Monitoring the integrity of power supplies shall be in accordance with NFPA 72, National fire alarm code, 2010 edition.
- At least 2 independent and reliable power supplies shall be provided.
- The primary power source shall be supplied from a dedicated twenty (20) ampere branch circuit and comply with NFPA 72, National Fire Alarm Code, 2010 edition.
- The in-building radio system shall be capable of operating on a battery dedicated to the system with at least 12 hours of 100% system operation capacity.
- The battery system shall automatically charge in the presence of external power input. The battery system shall be contained in 1 NEMA 4 or 4X type enclosure.

### **System Monitoring**

- The In-Building Radio system shall include automatic supervisory and trouble signals for malfunctions of the signal booster(s) and power supplies that are annunciated by the fire alarm system. Trouble signals must be immediately reported to the radio service provider.
- The integrity of the circuit monitoring the signal booster(s) and power supply (ies) shall comply with NFPA 72, National Fire Alarm Code, 2010 edition.
- System and Signal booster supervisory signals shall include Antenna Malfunction and Signal booster failure.
- Power supply supervisory signals shall include loss of normal AC power, Failure of battery charger, and Low battery capacity (alarming at 70% of battery capacity)
- The system shall be capable of operating on an independent battery, UPS and/or generator system for a period of at least 12 hours without external power input. The battery system shall automatically charge in the presence of external power input.
- Amplifiers shall be installed in secured areas in watertight NEMA 4 steel cabinets. The cabinets will be painted red and The words “Marlborough Fire/Police Department Radios” shall be marked on the cabinet as well as the BDA permit number, the maintenance vendor and vendor phone number.
- The BDA/UDA and any other active amplifiers must be located in an area with a 2 hour fire rating or in an enclosure with a 2 hour fire rating.

- All external antennas shall be provided with appropriate lightning protection in accordance with the National Electrical Code.

### **Dedicated Monitoring Panel**

- A dedicated monitoring panel shall be provided within the emergency command center to annunciate the status of all signal booster locations. The monitoring panel shall provide visual and labeled indication of the following for each signal booster:
  - (1) Normal AC power
  - (2) Signal booster trouble
  - (3) Loss of normal AC power
  - (4) Failure of battery charger
  - (5) Low battery capacity
- A sign will be located at the dedicated monitoring panel with the name and telephone number of the radio service provider indicating that they shall be notified of any alarm.
- The Marlborough Fire Department must be notified of any failures that extend past two (2) hours.

### **Radio Survey**

- The building owner shall have the in-building radio system tested to insure that two-way radio coverage on each floor of the building meets or exceeds the required 95%.
- Each floor of the building shall be divided into a grid of approximately twenty (20) equal areas. A maximum of one (1) area will be allowed to fail the test per floor. A spot located approximately in the center of a grid area will be selected for the test. Once the spot has been selected, prospecting for a better spot within the grid area will not be permitted. Field strength testing instruments are to be recently calibrated (1 year) and of the frequency selective type incorporating a flexible antenna similar to the ones used on the hand held transceivers.
- RF plots indicating the initial assessment of radio coverage and the enhanced coverage shall be submitted at the time of acceptance testing.
- All compliance testing to be done with 50 ohm loads in place of the donor antenna to avoid interference to the MFD/MPD radio system. The MFD Communications Section (508-624-6984 extension 15 and MPD 508-485-1212) is to be notified prior to any testing.
- Unattended operation of the in-building radio system is not permitted until the completion of acceptance testing.

## **Annual Tests**

- When an in building radio system is installed, the building owner shall be responsible for testing all active components of the system, including but not limited to amplifier, power supplies and back up batteries a minimum of once every 12 months from the date of the installation.
- Amplifiers shall be tested to insure that the gain is the same as it was upon initial installation and acceptance.
- Backup batteries and power supplies shall be tested under load for a period of one (1) hour to verify that they will operate during an actual power outage.
- Active components shall be checked to determine that they are operating within the manufacturer's specifications for their intended purpose.

## **Five Year Test**

- In addition to the annual test, the building owner shall perform a radio coverage survey test a minimum of once every five (5) years to insure that the in building radio system continues to meet the requirements of this ordinance.

## **Documentation**

- Documentation of all testing all testing, maintenance and repairs shall be kept on site and a copy forwarded to the Marlborough Fire Department. Electronic submissions of these reports are preferred.
- The building owner will also have maintenance contract with a competent technical support organization who can respond 24/7/365 with a response time of no more than 6 hours. The cost of this contact is the responsibility of the property owner.
- All testing shall be conducted, documented and signed by a person with a current FCC General Radiophone Operator License as defined in Title 47 of the Federal Code of Regulations or its equivalent.
- The costs of the annual and five (5) year tests are the responsibility of the building owner.

## **Fire Department Inspections**

- The building owner shall provide reasonable access to the Marlborough Fire Department and Marlborough Police Department personnel to conduct field-testing of the radio systems to determine if the required radio coverage is adequate.